

I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I want to thank Mr. STAUBER from Minnesota for introducing this legislation and working together with Congressman DESAULNIER from California.

As Ms. NORTON, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia, noted, in 2017, at San Francisco International Airport, a NOTAM had been issued, a notice to airmen, which is usually sent to notify pilots about changes in airspace or construction conditions or changes of conditions at airports.

One was issued that indicated that a runway was under construction and an alternative runway was open. They had an Air Canada flight that came in while four occupied planes were on the taxiway, and there was a near miss where this Air Canada flight nearly landed on a taxiway that they mistook for the alternative runway. It would have caused widespread death in the event that those five planes ultimately would have collided.

The National Transportation Safety Board, as noted, did find that the lack of comprehension, or possibly even reviewing this NOTAM, was a primary cause.

This legislation creates a task force to look at better ways of informing, of connecting with pilots, to make sure that they have accurate information and that they actually read or are aware of these changing conditions which could, as in the 2017 incident, be the difference between life and death.

Again, I want to thank Chairman DEFAZIO. I want to thank Ranking Member SAM GRAVES. I want to thank Mr. STAUBER, the author of this bill, with his partner, Congressman DESAULNIER from California.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. STAUBER).

Mr. STAUBER. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to rise in support of my bipartisan legislation that improves the safety of air travel. I would also like to thank my colleague, Mr. DESAULNIER, for his support and leadership on this piece of legislation.

In 2020, the United States was home to 7 of the top 10 busiest airports in the world. This means that, as Americans, we have no room for error when it comes to aviation safety.

Although aviation is the safest form of travel, we must always strive to do better. This is why we must address the notice to airmen, or NOTAM, system. NOTAMs are critical, as they relay safety information to pilots that allow them to understand the possible hazards and conditions of airports and

runways before actually getting to the destination.

The current system simply is not working as well as it should. NOTAMs are often buried in lengthy reports, conflating important safety information with more common alerts. These inefficiencies have the potential to create life-threatening situations, as described earlier.

My legislation addresses these issues and creates a task force at the FAA with important input from safety experts and industry professionals to address what changes need to be made to NOTAMs to make air travel even safer than it already is.

Americans are more comfortable and excited to travel than they have been in over a year. Let's ensure that we support this sentiment and bolster the safety in our skies.

I was proud to work with my colleagues to get this reported out of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee unanimously, both last Congress and this one.

The House also passed this legislation with strong bipartisan support during the 116th Congress, and I urge the same support this Congress of the Notice to Airmen Improvement Act.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. GUEST).

Mr. GUEST. Madam Speaker, first, I would like to thank Chairman DEFAZIO and Ranking Member GRAVES for bringing this bipartisan legislation to the floor.

H.R. 1262 would create a task force to recommend reforms and improvements to the notice to airmen system, a crucial domestic and international flight safety notification to pilots that has become both inefficient and outdated over the years.

The current state of the notice to airmen system has the potential to create life-threatening situations for both pilots and their passengers. This reform would provide the needed steps to provide important safety information to our Nation's pilots in a timely and concise manner.

In the most recent FAA reauthorization, Congress made it a priority that the agency delivers a new and modernized notice to airmen system, yet we have seen few results to date. This legislation would make that priority a reality within 1 year from this bill's enactment.

I would like to thank Congressman STAUBER for his leadership on this issue and for prioritizing aviation safety within this bill.

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Mr. GRAVES of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, in closing, I want to say that the United States has the

safest aviation system in the world, and air travel is the safest way to travel.

This bipartisan legislation by Congressmen STAUBER and DESAULNIER ensures that we maintain that level of safety for air passengers in the future. I think it is a great bipartisan piece of legislation. I appreciate those two gentlemen working on this together. I urge adoption of the legislation.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1262, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

WEST LOS ANGELES VA CAMPUS IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2021

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 711) An Act to amend the West Los Angeles Leasing Act of 2016 to authorize the use of certain funds received pursuant to leases entered into under such Act, and for other purposes, with the Senate amendment thereto, and concur in the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate amendment:

At the end, add the following:

SEC. 5. INCLUSION OF ASSESSMENT OF REVENUE EXPENDITURES AND DIRECT BENEFITS TO VETERANS IN ANNUAL REPORT.

Section 2(j)(2) of the West Los Angeles Leasing Act of 2016 (Public Law 114-226; 130 Stat. 929) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (A), by striking “; and” and inserting a semicolon;

(2) by redesignating subparagraph (B) as subparagraph (C); and

(3) by inserting after subparagraph (A) the following new subparagraph (B):

“(B) an assessment of—

“(i) the manner in which such revenue is expended; and

“(ii) the direct benefits such expenditures provide to veterans; and”.

Mr. TAKANO (during the reading). Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the original request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

VETERANS AND FAMILY INFORMATION ACT

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2093) to direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make all fact sheets of the Department of Veterans Affairs available in English, Spanish, and Tagalog, and other commonly spoken languages, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2093

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Veterans and Family Information Act”.

SEC. 2. FACT SHEETS.

(a) **LANGUAGES.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall make available versions of all fact sheets of the Department of Veterans Affairs in—

- (1) English;
- (2) Spanish;
- (3) Tagalog; and

(4) each of the 10 most commonly spoken languages, other than English, in the United States that are not otherwise covered by paragraphs (2) and (3).

(b) **WEBSITE.**—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall establish and maintain a publicly available website of the Department of Veterans Affairs that contains links to all fact sheets of the Veterans Benefits Administration, Veterans Health Administration, and of the National Cemetery Administration. The website shall be accessible by a clearly labeled hyperlink on the homepage of the Department.

(c) **REPORT.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs shall submit a report to Congress regarding fact sheets described in subsection (a) and details of the Language Access Plan of the Department of Veterans Affairs. The report shall include the following:

- (1) What the Secretary determines constitutes a fact sheet of the Department for purposes of this Act.
- (2) How such fact sheets are utilized and distributed other than on and through the website of the Department.
- (3) How such Language Access Plan is communicated to veterans, family members of veterans, and caregivers.
- (4) The roles and responsibilities of patient advocates in the coordination of care for veterans with limited English proficiency, family members of such veterans, and caregivers.

(5) Other demographic information that the Secretary determines appropriate regarding veterans with limited English proficiency.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to

insert extraneous material on H.R. 2093.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, since 2001 the foreign-born share of the veteran population has steadily risen. Immigrants have served in the Armed Forces since the very beginning of our Nation, and they today make up 600,000 veterans. 1.9 million veterans are the U.S.-born children of immigrants. Together, the 2.5 million veterans of immigrant origin, by birth or parentage, account for 13 percent of all veterans living today.

Certain nationals of countries in free association with the United States—the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and Palau—are eligible to serve the United States, and they do in numbers much larger than their counterparts stateside.

Half a million veterans live in Puerto Rico. There are 6,000 regular Philippine Scouts still alive and 15,000 U.S. veterans who live in the Philippines, half of whom rely on the VA clinic in Manila for their service-connected care.

Two-thirds of the veteran cohorts I just mentioned do not speak English at home. Many of them are aging and have to rely more and more on their families for care and to manage health decisions.

VA has scarce availability of veteran-facing materials in other languages, both online and in paper. Facilities are, for the most part, on their own to translate material that best serves their patients.

This extra burden was made clear to me during committee trips to Puerto Rico, where we heard from staff about the arduous work it took to have to translate everything from administrative staff training materials to hurricane brochures. Everything sent from VA Central Office in Washington, D.C., to Puerto Rico had to be redone so it could be usable and accessible to veterans and the staff who serve them.

The VA should be fully accessible to all veterans who need it, and that includes language accessibility. Mr. JEFFRIES’ bill, H.R. 2093, the Veterans and Family Information Act, would require VA to do what it should have been doing for years, make its veteran-facing fact sheets and websites available in languages veterans and their families speak; specifically, the languages of Spanish, Tagalog, and the other top 10 spoken languages in the United States. It would also require VA to create a language access plan for the VA enterprise.

Now, this is a long overdue correction of VA’s posture. If this pandemic has taught us anything, it is that clearly communicated public health information from our healthcare institutions is essential. VA must ensure that language proficiency is never a barrier to a veteran’s care.

I therefore ask my colleagues to join me in supporting the Veterans and Family Information Act.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2093, the Veterans and Family Information Act. This bill would require VA to make fact sheets available in multiple languages, including English, Spanish, and Tagalog.

I appreciate Congressman JEFFRIES’ introduction of this legislation, and I am glad to support it today. I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES), my good friend, the chairman of the Democratic Caucus and author of H.R. 2093.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Madam Speaker, I thank my good friend and classmate, Chairman TAKANO, for his tremendous leadership as well as the leadership of the ranking member and all of the distinguished members of the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2093, the Veterans and Family Information Act, a bipartisan bill that will serve those who have served our Nation with distinction. This common-sense legislation would improve non-English language accessibility for veterans, their families, and caregivers.

The Veterans Benefits Administration provides critical information to all veterans about their benefits that have been hard earned, including service-connected disability benefits, home loans, vocational rehabilitation, employment information, and how to access assistance for trauma.

For veterans of limited English proficiency, there is no guarantee that this critical information is made available in their primary language, thereby creating barriers for them and for their families.

As Chairman TAKANO indicated, there are over 500,000 foreign-born veterans that live in the United States, and additionally 1.9 million veterans who are the U.S.-born children of foreign-born parents.

Not only are our veterans increasingly diverse in terms of country of origin, but tens of thousands of veterans have self-identified to the VA that they speak English less than well.

In the most recent survey conducted, the VA also found that minorities, people of color, and language minorities comprise approximately 24 percent of the total veteran population in the United States.

Every single veteran deserves consistent, clear, and equal access to any and all information that the VA offers, regardless of their English proficiency. They have all served this country well.

The Veterans and Family Information Act would direct the Department of Veterans Affairs to make versions of